

WO 01/01029

3/ Peter

1

Daly
a*u*

HOSE

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a medium-carrying hose, preferably for pressure medium and for use in e.g. engine compartments, the wall of the hose comprising at least one wall portion which is connected with at least one expansion portion to form a continuous hose casing. The circumference of the hose is variable between a minimum value, when the expansion portion is unexpanded, and a maximum value, when the expansion portion is maximally expanded.

The invention also relates to a method for manufacturing such a hose.

Background Art

15 Hoses of the type that is used in engine compartments are subjected to various effects of the surroundings. For instance, they can be subjected to pressure, from inside or from outside, or to relatively powerful vibrations as the engine is running. The space for hoses
20 in motor compartments and the like is usually very limited. For an engine unit to be compact in terms of space, it is often necessary that the hoses be preformed and bent in given directions to fit between the other components of the engine. However there is one problem since
25 the hose, when pressurised, tends to move or bulge in the engine compartment. The hose may then abut against other parts of the engine body, which for instance because of their temperature may damage the hose. This situation may also arise if the hose vibrates in the operation of the
30 engine. Both pressurising and vibration besides cause a strain to the attachment of the hose in the engine unit.

There are today a plurality of hoses which have some kind of bellows structure at their ends, thereby reducing the vibrations in the attachment of the hose. However,

such bellow structures do not affect the motion of the various parts of the hose, which are still essentially free and can abut against neighbouring objects.

Such a hose is disclosed in e.g. EP 0 791 775, where 5 flexible portions at the ends of the hose are combined with a rigid hose portion in the middle of the hose. Vibrations are absorbed in the longitudinal direction of the hose at the hose ends, but otherwise the hose is allowed to move freely.

10

Summary of the Invention

According to the invention the above problems are solved by a hose of the type mentioned by way of introduction, the expansion portion of the tube extending 15 in the transverse and the longitudinal direction of the hose, the wall portions being displaced relative to each other in the transverse as well as the longitudinal direction of the hose as the circumference increases and the expansion portion expands.

20 By the expansion portion extending in the transverse and the longitudinal direction of the hose, the wall portions will be displaced in the transverse as well as the longitudinal direction when, for instance, pressurising the hose. The direction of motion of the portions during 25 pressurising can thus be controlled, so that there is no risk of the hose touching other components in, for example, an engine unit. The expansion portion can extend first in one then in other direction, or diagonally across the transverse and the longitudinal direction of 30 the hose. Also vibrations will be efficiently damped in a desirable manner when the vibrating motion of the wall portion is absorbed by the expansion portion. This means that the wall portion, and thus the hose, can be controlled in a desirable manner also in case of vibrations.

35 The wall and expansion portions may, if desirable, be differently formed in different parts along the hose in order to control, during expansion or vibration of the

hose, the direction of motion of the different parts in a desirable manner. The relationships of the wall and expansion portions can also differ in different parts along the hose.

5 In such a hose, which is preformed to have a certain extent in the longitudinal direction, as is often the case of hoses intended for engine compartments, the design of, and the relationships of, the wall and expansion portions in the hose casing in each part of the hose

10 is preferably adapted to the preform of the hose in the respective parts. One and the same preformed hose can thus advantageously be provided with differently formed expansion and wall portions.

15 Preferably the expansion portion may consist of a groove in the hose casing when this is in an unexpanded state. Such a groove is relatively easy to form by means of a design in which the expansion portion is formed in unity with the wall portion. The expansion of the groove can besides be controlled with the aid of the shape of

20 its cross-section.

25 Preferably the groove is helically turned seen in the longitudinal direction of the hose. The helical shape means directly that the expansion portion is oriented both in the transverse and in the longitudinal direction of the hose. Pressure and shocks in both directions are therefore efficiently absorbed by the hose.

30 The number of turns of the helical groove per unit of length of the hose may be varied to control the hose as desired. The groove may also have different direction of turning in different parts of the hose, or different cross-sectional shape in different parts of the hose. This results in many possibilities of variation.

35 Preferably the hose has one or more expansion portions, which are distributed along the circumference of the hose casing, for satisfactory distribution of the pressure and/or shock equalisation in each individual case.

The invention also relates to a method for manufacturing a hose according to the invention, in which the hose material is extruded. In addition to the hose material and together with this, a form material is extruded which is adapted to be a preform for the hose material for the desired configuration of expansion portions and wall portions. This preform serves to facilitate the process of extrusion. When the hose material, before blowing, has a relatively small diameter, there is a great risk that parts of the hose adhere to each other. This concerns in particular the expansion portions whose dimensions in the non-blown state are relatively small. A supporting form with expansion and wall portions is formed of the form material during extrusion and prevents problems in the forming of the hose material.

The form material is suitably arranged along the outer circumference of the hose material, which gives practical advantages in the method.

20 Preferably the form material is accumulated in the
portions of the hose material which are intended to form
expansion portions. These portions usually constitute
formed portions such as grooves. The bulging shape which
is necessary for the hose is produced by means of an ele-
vated portion in the form material, thus a thicker por-
25 tion of form material.

The form material can advantageously consist of an elastic material which extends along the circumference of the hose material. The form material of the completed hose will then be arranged along the circumference of the hose material and provides a smooth outer face for the hose. The elasticity of the material serves to make it possible for the expansion portions still to assume an unexpanded and an expanded state. A smooth outer face round the hose is advantageous since it is easier to keep clean than a hose with exposed expansion portions. The hose is then along its circumference provided with an elastic material.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 shows an embodiment of a hose according to the invention.

Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view along line II-II 5 of the hose in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a cross-sectional view along line III-III of the hose in Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 shows a second embodiment of a hose according to the invention.

10 Fig. 5 is a cross-sectional view along line V-V of the hose in Fig. 4.

Fig. 6 is a cross-sectional view along line VI-VI of the hose in Fig. 4.

15 Fig. 7 shows a third embodiment of a hose according to the invention.

Fig. 8 is a cross-sectional view along line VII-VII of the hose in Fig. 7.

Fig. 9 is a cross-sectional view of one more embodiment of a hose according to the invention.

20

Description of Preferred Embodiments

Fig. 1 illustrates a preferred embodiment of a hose according to the invention. The hose is preformed with a plurality of bends 1, 2 and a straight central portion 3. The circumferential surface of the hose is formed with grooves 4 which extend along the hose. In the first bent part 1 of the hose, the grooves 4 are helically turned along the hose. In this portion 1, shocks as well as pressure can be absorbed in several directions. In the second straight portion 3 of the hose, the number of turns of the helix per unit of length is considerably smaller, i.e. so small that the groove 4 extends essentially along the hose. In the middle of the straight portion 3, the helical groove 4 changes direction round the hose in order to form in this new direction a helix having a larger number of turns per unit of length in the last, bent part 2 of the hose.

The cross-section of the hose is shown in Fig. 2. Here the cross-sectional shape of the grooves 4 is essentially rectangular. Four grooves 4 are uniformly distributed along the circumference of the hose with wall portions 5 therebetween. In one of the end portions of the hose, the hose is smooth and without grooves 4, as shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 4 shows another embodiment of a hose according to the invention. The helical shape of the grooves 4 is similar to that of the hose in Fig. 1. The cross-sectional shape of the grooves 4, however, is different, which is evident from Fig. 5. Here the grooves 4 form a more acute angle to the wall portions 5 and between the walls of the groove. This design can, if it is made of the same material as in the embodiment in Fig. 1, absorb greater pressure and more powerful vibrations than in the embodiment in Fig. 1 owing to the greater expansibility of the grooves.

Figs 7-8 show a hose according to the invention, which is provided with an elastic form material along its circumference. In the manufacture of the hose by extrusion, the form material serves to give the hose the desired form with expansion and wall portions. In this embodiment an elastic form material is used, which is fixedly arranged on the hose and provides a smooth surface. The smooth surface can be advantageous to protect the hose from dirt. The elastic material, however, does not significantly prevent the relative movability between the portions. It is also possible to use a form material which is washed away after the hose is completed. Such a form material would then be used only in the extrusion and then be removed from the hose. The final result will then be a hose according to, for example, Figs 1-3.

It is also possible to arrange an electric material along the inner circumference of the hose. This yields the same advantages in terms of manufacture as those mentioned above, and also gives the hose a smooth inside,

which may be advantageous for the flow through the hose. The cross-section of such an embodiment of a hose according to the invention is shown in Fig. 9.

It goes without saying that many embodiments in
5 addition to those described above are feasible. The
shapes of the hoses and the grooves 4 can be varied in
many ways. Instead of having grooves, the expansion por-
tions can be designed in some other fashion, provided
that efficient expansibility is obtained. For instance,
10 the expansion portions 4 can be made of an elastic mate-
rial which is put together with the wall portions 5, or
of a weakened area which owing to its thinner wall thick-
ness will be more elastic than the surrounding wall por-
tions 5. By varying the above different parameters, the
15 hose portions can thus be made to be displaced in the
desired direction in pressurising or in case of vibra-
tions. Of course, the preform of the hose can also be of
a different design, according to the purpose of the hose.
It should also be noted that a hose according to the
20 invention, thanks to the expansion portions, can be made
flexible. Also the direction of the flexibility is then
dependent on the relationship of the expansion portions
4 and the wall portions 5.

Hoses according to the invention may also be provided with certain parts without any vibration-absorbing arrangements whatever.

Although the embodiments described above constitute hoses with a groove having a varying direction of turning in different parts of the hose, it is possible to have the same direction of turning along the entire hose. The cross-sectional shape may also be varied or constant along the hose, according to the requirements in the individual case. The hose can have one or more expansion portions, which can be uniformly or irregularly arranged.

35 It is also possible to have hoses where an elastic material is arranged both on the outer and on the inner circumference of the hose. The arrangement of elastic

material can be optimised for manufacture of the hose, for the flow therethrough as well as for cleaning. The effect of the grooves on the flow through the hose can optionally be used to control the flow.